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The sex scenarios of those spy plots

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Could Vitaly Yurchenko, the No. 5 man of the world's most ruthless secret police, have been done in by a mere *femme fatale*?

While Soviet experts try to figure out what made the defector defect, the most intriguing human explanation is that the woman who loved him only loved him as a spy. He lost all of his glamour when he became just another man trying to breathe free.

According to one delicious version, his former mistress, a married woman in Canada, sent him out into the cold when the CIA took him to Canada to visit her. She wouldn't leave her husband for an ordinary man, she told him. He became so despondent he decided to try to go home again (where a wife, among others, was waiting).

In my informal survey, men and women interpret this scenario differently. Women don't like it that one of their sisters told him to get lost simply because he lost his cloak and dagger. It reflects badly on our sex, no matter the culture. Such female behavior reveals us to be heartless and gives away one of our best kept secrets, that a woman can love a man for what he does rather than for who he is.

Men, oddly, are more sympathetic to this side of old Vitaly, but they tend to credit his glands rather than his heart for making him want to go home. He had that wife at home, boring as a sack of potatoes though she may be, but so far we know the reason he was having dinner with a CIA agent on a Saturday night in Georgetown is that there wasn't anybody else. (Arkady Yevtuchenko, an earlier Soviet defector, was given an unlimited expense account with which to buy mistresses, and quickly exceeded it).

If Mr. Yurchenko really is a double agent, and if he did what he did for the Soviet state, he may be safe from the KGB, but not from his wife. No wonder his marriage was charac-

terized as "rocky." If she finds out about his Canadian mistress — and she will, because gossip like this will leap the Iron Curtain even if tanks can't — we may never know whether it was she or the KGB who cut his throat.

When it was thought that the Canadian mistress killed herself after Mr. Yurchenko decided to go back to Russia (an official report now says the suicide victim was another woman), my survey of women and men again turned up big differences in interpretation.

Women believed his mistress might in fact have killed herself, so great was her remorse.

Men believed that such a heartless creature would have felt nothing at all. The KGB probably threw her off the balcony, they said, because she knew too much.

Now that we know that the mistress of the North lives, some people are willing to believe that she, too, was a plant, to make Mr. Yurchenko's story more credible to the CIA. The (red) star-crossed lovers could have been play-acting from a script written by the KGB. That's how Americans would have done it in "Mission Impossible." But it's hard for me to believe that the Soviet government which violates human rights and maliciously separates husbands from wives and parents from children is capable of writing a spy-romance worthy of, say, Meryl Streep and, hmmm, maybe Gene Hackman.

What you imagine Mr. Yurchenko's life will be like back in the Soviet Union depends on whose story you believe. The bird who is pushed out of the nest is always a little suspect, even by his mama bird.

Mr. Yurchenko may inherit another problem, of discovering "the real me." He may suffer the same psychological distress undercover policemen do. Undercover agents have difficulty dropping their undercover identities once they come back into their real world, a new FBI study notes. An undercover cop sometimes alternates personalities, unwittingly continuing to play underground pimp or flamboyant narc dealer even after he is once again straight cop.

"Some begin to drink heavily," Michel Girodo, a University of Ottawa psychology professor who studies their double identities, told *The Wall Street Journal*. "Others search out and frequent the locales which resemble their target hangouts. Others refuse to get a haircut, shave their beards, or hand in their jewelry, expensive suits, and cars."

If Mr. Yurchenko suffers from any of these symptoms he might actually begin to act like a free man, and that could be deadly. It is unlikely, however, that the KGB will be as careless with him as the CIA was. If he wants a breath of fresh air after too much vodka, his KGB colleague isn't likely to stay behind to pay the check.

It's almost impossible to sort out the truth when a spy speaks. Look at the trial of Richard W. Miller, the first FBI agent to go on trial for espionage. His trial ended in a hung jury.

The government thought it had a good case against Mr. Miller. Sex (surprise!) was a major ingredient. He had an affair with a Soviet woman who pleaded guilty to espionage and is now serving 18 years in prison. The prosecutor said she initiated the sexual relationship to gain control over him.

The defense lawyers said Mr. Miller sought the sexual relationship to enhance his career and become a hero. He only wanted sex to infiltrate the KGB network in San Francisco and Moscow to which his mistress reported.

Two jurors refused to convict him because they thought the FBI had let the "hanky-panky" go on too long without confronting the agent, that he was set up for the arrest. They apparently bought the idea that he was gritting his teeth and sleeping with his Russian mistress for the good of his country.

Several years ago the mayor of a small town in Arkansas was caught here with his pants down at 3 o'clock in the morning when the cops raided a U Street bordello. The story of the raid made the Washington newspapers. Instead of creeping home in the middle of the night and keeping his mouth shut, he went home and called a press conference to explain to his constituents what had *really* happened. "I was investigating urban problems," he said.

Vitaly Yurchenko wouldn't be the first man to learn that there are some things you just can't explain — and if you're smart you won't even try.

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